

# 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

## UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA

Since Israel's founding in 1948, the United States has stood firmly as its closest ally in the Middle East. The first country to recognize Israel, the United States has forged a deep and unshakeable bond with Israel through a multifaceted relationship that reflects the depth and breadth of the ties between the American and Israeli people and the values that we share.

Under President Obama's leadership, American engagement with Israel has grown and strengthened to an unprecedented degree. From meeting frequently with Israel's leaders to ensuring that Israel remains the largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance, the President is deeply committed to helping Israel maintain its strength and security.

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Here are the five key facts you need to know about the U.S.-Israel relationship under President Obama:

### **1 A STRONG DEFENDER: PRESIDENT OBAMA HAS STRENGTHENED ISRAEL'S DEFENSE IN CONCRETE AND UNPRECEDENTED WAYS:**

- Israel remains the leading recipient of U.S. foreign military financing (FMF), receiving over \$20.5 billion since 2009.
- The United States in Fiscal Year 2014 provided Israel with more security assistance funding than ever before. In Fiscal Year 2016, which marks the eighth year of a 10-year, \$30 billion Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Israel, we have asked Congress for \$3.1 billion in FMF funds for Israel.
- The President has provided an additional \$2.9 billion in funding for missile defense programs and systems. Since 2011, the United States has provided Israel with over \$1.3 billion for the Iron Dome system alone, including \$225 million in short-fuse funding last summer.
- The U.S. and Israel regularly conduct joint exercises to improve our military capabilities and strengthen our bilateral security.

### **2 AN INTERNATIONAL ALLY: UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA, THE U.S. HAS LED GLOBAL EFFORTS TO DEFEND ISRAEL'S LEGITIMACY ON THE WORLD STAGE:**

- Last year, the U.S. opposed 18 resolutions in the UN General Assembly that were biased against Israel.
- On five occasions last year, the U.S. cast the only "no" vote against unfair anti-Israel measures in the UN's Human Rights Council.
- The U.S. worked with Israel and the European Union to organize the first UN General Assembly session on anti-Semitism in the UN's history, held in January 2015.

### **3 A PROPONENT FOR PEACE: THE PRESIDENT HAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED ISRAEL IN ITS QUEST FOR PEACE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS:**

- President Obama has repeatedly stood up for a two-state solution that ensures the peace and security of Israelis and Palestinians.
- Under the President's direction, Secretary Kerry initiated an intensive, collaborative effort to facilitate negotiations for a comprehensive peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians.
- The President prioritized Israel's security by asking one of our foremost military experts to help develop security arrangements that ensure a two-state solution leaves Israelis more secure, not less.

### **4 AN ECONOMIC PARTNER: UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA, THE U.S. HAS A STRONG AND ROBUST COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL:**

- This year marks the 30th anniversary of the United States-Israel Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which was the first FTA entered into by the United States.
- U.S. goods exports to Israel in 2014 were \$15.1 billion, up 9.6% (\$1.3 billion) from 2013, and up 64% from 2004. U.S. exports to Israel are up 587% from 1984 (Pre-FTA).
- U.S. goods imports from Israel were \$23.1 billion in 2014, a 1.1% increase (\$242 million) from 2013, and up 58% from 2004. U.S. imports from Israel are up 1,203% from 1984.
- The U.S. continues to invest in the BIRD Foundation, a U.S.-Israeli partnership between private sectors to expand private high-tech industries. Since its founding in 1977, the \$295 million in grants have been awarded to 800 partnerships, generating over \$10 billion in product sales.

### **5 A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS: UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA, THE U.S. HAS INVESTED MILLIONS IN HELPING ISRAELI IMMIGRANTS:**

- In the last six years, U.S. humanitarian assistance to refugees and migrants travelling to Israel totaled \$140 million. This funding is used to help transport eligible migrants to Israel, transitional shelter, intensive Hebrew-language programs that focus on newly arriving immigrants, or youth programming in Israel.

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Since Israel's founding, the U.S. has provided Israel with over \$120 billion in bilateral assistance and, under President Obama's leadership, the U.S. will continue to be Israel's strongest ally and staunchest supporter in its pursuit of peace and security in the Middle East.